

# JOSHUA'S RESOLUTION;

Or the DUTIES of  
Household-Governours,

Discoursed of, and fairly stated ;

Their Failures therein mildly consider'd, and  
without favour or affection impartially weighed.

The Subject suited to the Capacities of *Tamworth*  
Auditory, and Preached there, and elsewhere,

---

By *John Wagstaffe*, A. M.

And Rector of *Little Wenlock*, in *Shropshire*.

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*In Sep.* Χείλη δὲ φιλήσουσιν ἀποκρινόμενα λόγους ἀγαθούς.  
saith King *Solomon* in his *Proverbs*, ch. 24. 26. He  
will be befriended (*not frowned on*) that declares  
the Truth.

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TABLES OF

RESOLUTIONS

FOR THE

1811



T H E  
Epistle Dedicatory :

To Religious, Conscientious Governours , of all  
Ranks and Degrees among us, &c.

To the Meanest, as well as to the Greatest.

**N**O Present too great for so worthy Patrons,  
(and in particular to my own, and that  
Loyal one, where it was first Preacht )  
yet, such as I have, with all heartiness I  
humbly present to you, you who experimentally know  
how far easier it is to obey, than command. Tho it be a  
Parents Prerogative to command his Children, yet it is  
duty in him to obey a Father or a Magistrate, plac'd  
in Authority over him, tho it be a Magistrates Pri-  
viledge to controul, and call to account, all under his  
Jurisdiction, yet it is his bounden Duty to obey Sove-  
raignty, and Kingly Government; and tho it be the best  
Jewel, and the very Diadem of a Crowned King to  
command



## The Epistle Dedicatory.

command his Subjects, yet it is his Interest, and greatest Happiness to obey his Maker and Creator, that most glorious Majesty of Earth and Heaven \*, that you may easily observe, that no Mortal, no not the greatest Grandee, but a Deity himself \*, that is exempted (one time or other) from obeying and serving as well as commanding and ruling; Therefore what's offered you in these following sheets, 'tis to pleasure (Friends) the befrienders of Godliness and Christianity, of Protestantism and Unity\*, and not at all to pretend to inform the Nation of any thing that it knows not, but to remember them that are in it, that they do what they know. It is true, the Land abounds in Knowledge, I wish I could say the same, for the honour of it, that it did so too in practice, then we should be as happy \*, and as flourishing as now we begin to be declining, and contemptible, but that poor England may redeem its lost Reputation, let each of us discharge those particular Duties that are incumbent on us; and every single person take their own parts that are allotted them; and that their own Consciences carve out for them, and not to intrench upon anothers right, that all of us may act and do like Rational men that have Immortal Souls to save, like the true Professors of Christianity, like those that do heartily protest against Rebellion and Popery, Faction and Phanaticism, Enthusiasm and Atheism; nay, against Irreligion, and all manner of Prophaneness whatsoever, and not to look one way, and with all might and main to row another; for we had not been hitherto spared, if kind Providence had not stept in between, and watcht over us for good, safeguarded us one time after another, from those

\* Prov. 8. 15.

\* 21. 1.

\* Phil. 2.

\* Joh. 13. 17.



## The Epistle Dedicatory.

those apparent dangers wherewith we were compassed, that we our selves do now plain enough see; we had ere now been engag'd, imbroil'd in another Civil War, our Hands and Garments by this time, to have been dyed in each others Blood, which would have been small Credit to Christians, or to our English Nation\*.

But if after all, there be only a shew of Sanctity, a meer shadow and Mock-pageantry of Piety, and that the Substance and Glory is wanting, viz. (the practice) have we not still great cause greatly to fear (that under the colour of Religion, which it utterly disowns) of having the old abhorr'd Tragedy sham'd upon us afresh, if it were not for the prudent Conduct and Mercifulness of one of the most indulgent Princes that did ever sway a Royal Scepter, that I hope will yet vanquish the bitterest of his Enemies, by the wonders of his kindness and forbearance\*, that has been hitherto already stretcht out \* Prov. 19. 11, 12. to a miracle, that if we at any time miscarry, it will soon be found, detected, to be our disservice, untowardness, disobedience, ingratitude to Powers. Ordained of God\*, (to God-like Clemency and Authority) there- \* Rom. 13. 1. fore if we still persist in our dissingenuity, inhumanity, to put him upon any thing which his Kingly Conscience cannot yield to\*; and for all that, what do we \* Rom. 14. 23. do more by our Jealousies and Whispers\*, but still continue to trespass, dun and harrafs the Lords Anointed\*? \* Prov. 16. 28, 29, 30. and then what do we do less but dare Majesty it self at \* 1 Sam. 24. 6. length to punish us, and provoke him to that which he is loth to undertake, viz. (our Ruine) yet if we perish, (if we perish\*) whom have we to blame but our selves? \* Esther 4.

And to me 'tis as clear as noon-day Light, that the wickedness, ungovernableness, hate and haughtiness of the Peoples Spirits does strangely portend, if not timely

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

\* Jonah 1. *timely prevented, our misery and downfall, which that  
so dreadful a storm \* may be diverted, and rather  
lighten on the Protestant Foes, I am not shy in own-  
ing my self one of that Loyal Praying number \*, (tho  
\* 3. 10. Prayers and Tears, by some, are made light of al-  
ready;) That is, an humble Petitioner at the Footstool  
of Heaven, where it is no crime to be a Supplicant,  
tho one of the meanest, yet willingly would be one  
of the Humblest, Truest Servants*

To the GREAT JEHOVAH,

And to all his Vicegerents here below,

(To the *Pater Patriæ*, & *Pater Familias*,)

To the Governours of Kingdoms,

And to the Governours of Families.

JOHN WAGSTAFFE.

*Josbua's*



## Joshua's Resolution, &c.

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Joshua 24. 14, 15, 16.

14. *Now therefore, fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the Gods, which your Fathers served on the other side of the floud, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord.*
15. *And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, chuse you this day whom you will serve, whether the Gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the floud, or the Gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: But as for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord.*
16. *And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other Gods; Amen, Amen.*

**T**HE Text is too long for a single Sermon, therefore mostly to enlarge on that comprehensive passage; *But as for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord*; as if he had said, As for others, let them do what they will, the vain obstinate world do as they think good, but as for his particular part, and his whole house, he had undertaken for them, to serve the Lord; a rare, but

B

yet



## The Duties of Governours,

yet an excellent Copy set before us; therefore let Masters and their Families endeavour to the utmost to transcribe it into their practice; to be religious, devout and godly, to serve the Lord, the great *Jehovah*, and not the world, themselves, or the like, which is the best way of expressing our thankfulness for the many Deliverances, that the King and Kingdom has been blest withal, by our Homage and Obeysance to the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth; which does include the same to all that are plac'd in Authority under him, our Loyalty and Service to them; so that observe,

1. Here's a Resolution to be religious and virtuous, not to be wicked, vicious, or factious.

2. By whom? By one going the way of all the Earth\*; nay, by a Commander, the Chief General of the *Israelites* Forces, for himself, and his Family; not for the Army, or the Nation, or the Country in general, or for any part of it in particular, as the *Amorites*, or the *Perizzites*, for the *Canaanites*, or *Hittites*, or for the *Gergesites*, the *Hivites*, or the *Jebusites*, &c\*.

\* Ver. 11.

3. But Thirdly; On what was resolved on; Service, not the Military and War-like, but on the Worship and Service of God.

4. To whom in the last place? To the Lord; not one word of serving of self, of Parties, or Factions, of Passions, or Prejudices, of Interests, by sinister ends, or the like.

I do now expect that you will look for it, that I should inform you in what particulars the Service of the Lord should be express'd in, tho' none be express'd in the Text. Besides, the people five or six times over in the same Chapter confirm the same, promise  
and

and protest to serve the Lord \*, but did not particularize in what; only in general against sinning, Superstition, and Idolatry \*, which we mostly ought to level our displeasure against; at which we will make some attempt before we have done. But first of all to intimate and insinuate with some takingness, if it might be, what we should do. And then afterwards secondly in the Application, (without giving any just offence) to shew you what we have done, and what the very best of us all are too subject for to do.

\* Ver. 16, 18,  
21, 22, 24.

\* Ver. 19, 20.

1.

2.

But with the first, What we should do as to serving of God? All of you know, 'tis well if you did it, that you your selves, your second selves, your Children, your Servants, should serve the Lord; As old Father *Abraham* set you long ago a pattern as to himself and his household \*. And that pious *Jeshua* did the same, and that we should do so too; not only to lay down Precepts, to give them good Rules, but first of all, to give them a good Example, and not to rest there, but take care of them afterwards, to Read to them, to hear them Read, to Catechize (Catechize) instruct, to pray with, and for them; to Preach to them, direct them, and the like, &c. I mean, frequently to mind them of their Duty, and earnestly press them to it, and as eagerly to put them on it: But these things I shall not stand to insist on, tho' of great consequence, they are so commonly known, yet the Lord knows, too seldom practised; tho' in the New Testament you are told, he is worse than an Infidel that does not take care of his Family and Kindred \*. Now, if provision for persons bodys be so necessary and reasonable, what is then due, and of absolute necessity for the good and welfare, for

\* Gen. 18. 19.

\* 1 Tim. 5. 8.

the well being, and well doing of our precious long-liv'd Souls, the others being only the shells and carcases, at best but the Cabinets and Lodgings for these, if the breach of the former; if the over-looking of the Body be so censur'd and condemn'd for worse than Heathenism; what (*What*) will then the neglect of the other be, the Soul, but termed the highest ingratitude, the most notorious Crime imaginable, the most capital offence that a man can possibly be guilty of, a kind of spiritual unnaturalness and inhumanity, of butchery and Soul-murder, that few, or none would willingly be taxt withal, totally ruining the better part of you and yours, and that for ever, and ever?

Therefore train up your Children in the way that you would have them to go, and they'll not depart from it when they are old \*. And Servants, be not men-pleasers only, but such as know that you have a Master in Heaven, that sees all, and will first or last call you unto an Account \*.

\* Eph. 6. 6,  
7, 8.

And again, How shall a young Man cleanse his ways, but by taking heed unto God's Word, and walking accordingly \*?

\* Psal. 119. 9.

And lastly, To you that are Old; 'tis the Lords service only that crowns your gray hairs, and hoary heads with glory \*.

\* Prov. 16. 31.

But now you Governours of Families, if you cannot by threats, or promises, by kindneses, or punishments, reclaim those about you, and under your Roof, or Charge, will it be much amiss if you follow godly *David's* practice, as it is in *Psal.* 101. not to suffer a Lye, by naming one, I conclude it comprehends all; a Swearer, a Drunkard, a Fornicator, an Adulterer, no not a Purloiner, a Bate-breeder, a Tale-bearer,

Verse 7.



bearer, a Libeller, a State-mender, *that goes out of his own sphere*, an Evil-doer, to lodge within your doors \*, so as to countenance or encourage them; but such either reform and change, or, as you have opportunity, to dismiss and banish out of your presence and society, company or custody.

1 Joh. 4. 10,  
11.

Having now gone so far towards the explaining this phrase of serving the Lord, I will further unravel my meaning.

Tho' 'tis true, one says it is this, to be of this Party and Faction, another, 'tis that, to be of that Side and Interest; a third declares, it is neither; a fourth cannot tell what it is, is at a loss, and so far to seek upon the account of the former, and so onwards to many more.

Now, notwithstanding all these variety of different Opinions, of thwarting, clashing, and jarringly contradicting one another, it is probable it may seem to some somewhat hard to direct you to keep the Mean and Mid-way amongst these faulty Extreams; but (with God's Assistance) I'll venture to state the case, and it may, I hope, please and convince, or at least all Parties, the most querulous gainsayers shall have nothing material to object against it; whilst I am minding my own business, and from the very bottom of my Soul studying to be quiet and peaceable; whilst I am imploy'd in my Calling \*, for there is none that are, or should be without \*; whilst I am innocently diverting my self in company; whilst profitably discoursing, having my conversation in Heaven\*; whilst I am boasting what the Lord hath done for my poor Soul \*, that I am not given up to my self, to run with the vile world, to all excess of Riot; to be taken with

1 Thes. 4. 11.

1 Tim. 2. 15.

\* As ye may see in the Gentleman and Lady's Calling, Which is worth the frequent perusing and practising.

\* 1 Cor. 7. 24.

\* Phil. 3. 20.

\* Psal. 66. 16.

the

the Vanities, Fopperies, Follys of an abused Age; how he has rescued me as a Firebrand out of the Jaws of Death and Hell; whilst I am instructing the Ignorant, reclaiming the Extravagant, and advising the Runagate and Prodigal in my Family to return, I am serving the Lord; whilst I am letting them know, what pleasure I have in being truly Religious, what secret Raptures, ravishing Transports, unknown Pastimes and Extasies of Joys I have in doing the will of my heavenly Father; it is such a pious Feast, and delightful Banquet, that the greatest Epicurean knows not of\*.

\* Luke 14.

That I would not be hired off by the wealth of the *Indies*, though a large bribe, to do as I have Done, or to be as vain, simple, and foolish, as the world, to be as earthly, sensual, and Devilish, as they that are in it.\* I am serving the Lord while visiting the Widow and Fatherless, relieving and comforting of them\*,

\* Jam. 3.15.

\* Jam. 1. 27.

whilst reaching out mine hand, and administering to the necessities of the weak, sick and needy, whether in Soul or body Whilst I am Sympathizing and strongly phancying my self in their deplorable circumstances, and then calling to mind my own happy Condition; I cannot chuse but be chearful, Bless and Adore my God it is not so with me, whilst I am setting

\* Prov. 31.

my hand to the Plow or to the Needle.\* Doing good Offices at home for them; Catering for my self, the family, any body towards clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, nay giving but a Cup of cold water to the thirsty, a poor business, yet sufficient If I have no better\*.

\* Mat. 10.42.

(Now no Divine or humane Law with us, that I know of, forbids or restrains any of us from doing any of these things.) And lastly to instance in no more, whilst I am giving a good Example to all that

are

are round about me that either converse with me, know me or hear of me, and do as I would be done by \*; and when I have done all \* (as if I had done nothing at all) to look for salvation through the Merits onely and Intercession of a mighty Saviour and the blessed Spirit, and not by my own worthless works and services. I am more truly serving my God, and doing what he requires of me, then were I with my weak hands, with my feeble power upholding a tottering Ark \*; though honestly meant, poor *Uzzah's* life dearly paid for it, or more plainly thus, were I with my shoulders supporting a reeling Church unless extraordinarily called thereto, which if otherwise, 'tis to suspect or Distrust the Lords Ability, and that the Almighty God has need of our poor help.

\* Luke 16.

Luke 17. 10.

\* Col. 3. 11.

\* 2 Sam. 6.

6, 7.

But more particularly, whilst I am Doing the afore-named things, I am as sincerely serving and honouring my God, and doing that which is as well pleasing to him, as if I was hearing a Well composed Sermon, that did hit my humour in every *punctillio*, or as if I was in my study, or closet reading a good book, or upon my bended knees Devoutly praying, or privately keeping a voluntary Fast; tho' these are excellent things in their places, and must by no means be neglected (I Repeat it that I may not be mistaken, though these are excellent things in their places, and must by no means be wholly neglected) (and will not be by any Godly Person, yet truly the others are the main ones that must be done, remembring too that these may not be left undone \*, for if Comparison, (are not too distastful) may but be admitted of. The very Life and Soul, the visible Effects, and blessed fruits the very juice and quintessence of all these, as of Praying, Reading, Hearing, Fasting, and the like, are the

\* Mat. 23. 23.



the former : As it is notably confirm'd in *Isaiab's* prophesy ch. 58. at large, from one end to the other, and let this one place suffice for many, because it takes in all others.

But now to encourage you in so noble a service as  
 \* Mat. 11.30. Serving the Lord, that is an easy service first \* ; Nor  
 \* Prov. 3. 17. onely easy but secondly pleasant \*. And 3. Not onely  
 \* 1 Tim. 4.8. pleasant, but profitable. And lastly, Not only profitable,  
 \* 1 Sam. 2.30. but honourable \*. What would any of us desire more  
 in any service ? They are such special Ingredients, and  
 taking qualifications that would highly recommend  
 to us any Course of life besides. And now what  
 strange ill humour'd Creatures are we that are so  
 averse, and obstinately bent against our own Interest,  
 here and happiness hereafter ?

But to come to the other thing that was promised,  
 Application ; surely 'tis now needless, yet for the sake  
 of the meanest I'll make bold with the quickest of  
 Apprehension as formally to tell you the first use  
 will be of Exhortation, the next a mild way of re-  
 prehension, little exprest, but a great deal to be under-  
 stood, and the last a general and particular Direction  
 or two.

First, To begin with the use of Exhortation, to ex-  
 hort us to the service of God, whether of *Paul*, *Apollo*,  
 or *Cephas* or Christ, for I conjecture all these kinds and  
 perhaps many more that make up this flourishing  
 Congregation ; I do not now call you to answer to  
 those unhappy unchristian-like names, that you have  
 branded each other withall, and as if you delighted in  
 what you have done, taking a kind of a secret vaunt-  
 ing pride in being so termed, paying it off in thinking  
 and forecasting what you will do \*. But whatever your  
 private sentiments may be of the transactions of the  
 world,

\* Jam. 4.

world let me prevail with you in this one thing, 'tis no unreasonable request at all, for then I should not Expect to speed, that we all unanimously agree in this to serve the Lord [to serve the Lord] And in that way too which he himself hath appointed, yea in those very things which I have instanced in before,

\* 1 Pet. 3.

As for imposing, or so much as glancing on mens Consciences, they are such nice delicate compositions, that they must be gently touched, very tenderly dealt withal; 'tis done to my Hands by a more Able Pen called a Discourse on a scrupulous conscience. Therefore to wave that; My Design is only to strike at Mens sinful Actions and practices, and I pray you, so forward and encourage me in so good a work, sa to bring home the blow. If you will not for Gods sake, for the Churches, for the Kings, nor for the Kingdoms, nor for Christs sake, nor for your poor immortal Souls sake; yet out of interest and advantage, for by & sinister ends, serve the Lord. And when once you have tasted how good his Service is, you will then out of more noble, generous principles, as I hinted to you before, it being not only an easy, pleasant, profitable, but an honourable service; so that if you love your selves, and, who is there that does not? then thirst after your own real good and happiness; love God with all your Souls and Minds, and serve him with all your strength and might; express it in your Christian Charity, in your hearty love and service to one another, and to love your Neighbour as your self\*; and as you do expect, and would fain have the like from him, and to the utmost endeavour for Unity\*, to be of one mind, so great is the advantage of it, but if that is almost impossible, and

By my worthy Tutor  
Dr. Callaway.

\* Psal. 34.

Jam. 2. 8.  
*Non habet charitatem Dei qui Ecclesie non diligit Unitatem.* I met with this in that inoffensive Learned Author Dr. Barrow on Unity.  
\* Eph. 4.

\* Luke 17.

\* 1 Cor. 13. 7.

that offences must, and will come, as the Saviour of the World informs you \*; but give none, and then you'll be sure to save your own Souls, having charitable thoughts of all, construing every thing in the most favourable sense that it is capable of\*; and if there must needs be Emulations, and Contentions among you at any time, let them be of the better stamp; strive which shall out-strip each other in the ways of Piety, and real Holiness, and frequently offer to overcome one another (which is the best sort of Conquest) by abundance of love and condescension, by frequent acts of kindness, and repeated favours, to weary out your very Foes with love, to load them with Gratuities and Courtesies, to do good Offices for bad ones, and the like.

Thus to persevere, and hold out to the end, is in good earnest to serve the Lord, our selves, our Families, all that we have to do withal, the place we are in, the Neighbourhood, the Country, the King, and the Kingdom.

*Use 2.*

But in the next place, by way of Reprehension, to calm it with some Advice, and to shew you how we have grossly mistaken the service of God.

I.

\* 1 Pet. 2. 13.

\* Jam. 2. 9.

Now if miserableness and covetousness, if domestick Jars and Discords, if little Piques and Quarrels with our Neighbours, if taking that for sin which is duty \*, if looking upon that to be duty which is none\*; as for Instance; If fondness to a Party, and disgust to a contrary Persuasion; if hating and disdaining; if proud, humility, and phantastick conceitedness; if throwing our selves upon the ground, like a Tennis-ball, with a design to rebound so much the higher; if base Apostacy, and downright Revolting; if notorious Hypocrisie, and famous Dissembling; if this be  
serving



serving of God, we have whole shoals of such Professors to produce daily.

If discontents and murmurings, if whining, and being on the complaining key, if disobedience and untowardness to Superiours, in Office, Age, or Gift, to Parents, Ministers, Magistrates, &c. if burlesquing and buffooning, if miscalling and nick-naming, if raising false Reports, and spreading them for true ones \*, if lying and back-biting, if blasting mens Credit, and plundering them of what is more dear to them than their lives, their good Names; if censuring, casting darts and firebrands at one another, as *Solomon's* Proverbs phraseth it \*; if this be serving God, we have enough of this Tribe and counterfeit Stamp to present you withal.

\* James 3.

\* Pro. 26. 18,  
19, 20.

If scandalous Reflections, and boldly speaking evil of Dignities \*; if inveighing, and letting flie at the Government after a strange rate, and saying as it is in the Book of *Ecclesiastes* \*, What is the cause why former times were better than these, we do not do wisely in so doing, as that place informs you; yet if all this be serving of God, (as 'tis matter of fact,) there's many, too too many do this to some purpose, that do, or should know better.

\* 2 Pet. 2  
Jude.

\* Ch. 7. & 10.

And those too that are pleas'd to stile themselves the only true Protestant Christians, tho' they act clear contrary thereto, they will think me surely never the worse Friend, or greater Enemy \* for speaking the Truth; but to reprieve your dying Fame, transgress, sin no more in this kind, or any other; be no more superstitious, lest a worse thing befall you \* than ever you dreamt of yet, by losing of both worlds, the present *Canaan* in possession, and the eternal one in reversion \*.

\* Gal. 4.

\* John 5. 14.

\* Deut. 30.  
19, 20.

*The Duties of Governours,*

But again, to direct my Discourse to those, who in their Judgment are for Church-Discipline, but in their practice against it, which truly does the greatest disservice, more by far than the most enraged of our Enemies. Now if prodigality and intemperance, if rioting and drunkenness, if dallying and fornicating, if cursing and banning, if swaggering and swearing, hectoring and rallying at those that are not of their Judgment in every nicety and punctilio (and when did we ever see two faces so alike, but that they might be distinguished by a Mole, feature, a look, or the like?) If this be serving of God, there are those that do it with a witness, thinking themselves too the best Loyalists; but ah poor deluded Souls! 'tis neither to God nor their Sovereign.

\* Pro. 16. 12,  
13, 14, 15.  
\* Prov. 25. 5.

\* 1 Sam. 12.  
25.

Those that are bad to themselves, cannot be good to their great Lord and Master. *Take away the wicked from before the King* (saith King Solomon \*) *and his Throne shall be established* (for ever) *in Righteousness*. So that it is our sins that do most prejudice our Dread Sovereign, and do undermine his Government, shake his Kingdom; and unless we be truly penitent, 'tis well if we and our most glorious King do not perish \*, which the Lord long preserve Him and all his that are truly Loyal (whatever Convictions may be upon their Spirits, to leave that to God and themselves.) But how can it be imagin'd they that are false-hearted, treacherous, and disloyal to their own Souls, that they should be either true or constant to God in Heaven, or to Man on Earth? How can it be possibly expected, that they that carelessly destroy their own lives, should take care of, and charily preserve Him, His, or any others.

Therefore

Therefore instead of condemning Providence for being too exact and severe with the poor Church of *England*, or with the King or Kingdom at any time. Let's strive to be religious, that's the only way to appease it, to be successful and prosperous\*, and most serviceable to all three. 'Tis Righteousness that (that great Politician *Solomon* says) exalts a Nation\*. 'Tis our backsliding and revoltings that is the downfall and overthrow of any people. 'Tis sin (sin) that makes breaches in our poor Protestant walls, overturns our bulwarks, and most fortified places; so that I need not apologize to such for my plain dealing, when calm and sober as they are. Now, they will scarce forgive themselves, but sadly bewail, these their former miscarriages, as their imbecillity and weakness, as their great frailty, and inexcusable folly, taking these rebukes and buffetings as the highest expressions of the greatest friendship, and the heartiest kindness\*. For every one can act the part of a Sycophant, to sooth and cajole; but few, or none that of a faithful friend, or true Minister of the Gospel: to blame, reprove, as there is occasion\*.

\* Prov. 11. 11.

\* Prov. 14. 34.

\* Prov. 9. 8.

Pro. 27. 5, 6.

\* 1 Tim. 5.

20, 21.

Besides, such knowing that the distressed Church of *England*, (as to its Doctrine) in her lowest ebb, will not dispense with such oblique, crooked practices, (this her Sons and Daughters well enough know.)

If our Practices could but reach our Principles, oh what manner of persons should we then be in all holy conversation and godliness! There would then be more difference betwixt them and too many others, as there is betwixt the glorious Sun at noon day in all its bright shining lustre, and the poor Glow-worm that is crawling up the ditch bank, that mostly sparkles and glitters in the darkest night; this is the happiness



happinefs of ours, that is by Law enthron'd, I hope  
 \* Mat. 16. 18. so firmly fixt, that the Gates of Hell may never  
 prevail against it \*; though 'tis true, there is none  
 without its spots and flaws, yet those that entirely  
 \* Ps. 122. love her, will never cease praying for her peace and  
 welfare \*: But by our sins, oh my particular friends!  
 we are very unkind, nay cruel to her, that we insen-  
 sibly stab, give the deepest wounds to our Religion  
 \* Gal. 2. 14. and Christian Profession \*, that are almost incurable;  
 by our irregular, unaccountable lives; so that for the  
 future, let the innocency of our lives be the Churches  
 best Scutcheon, and greatest glory, the sweetness, ob-  
 ligingness of our conversation win upon Profelite,  
 \* Rom. 15. 2. dissatisfied Brethren \*, Heathens, Runagates, and the  
 \* 1 Cor. 9. 29, like, to gain a Soul, Souls: And if one be of more  
 \* Mal. 16. 26. worth than a world \*, what value shall we then put  
 upon thousands, that will amount to more than ten  
 thousand Kingdoms or Worlds; therefore let such a  
 spirit of Godliness, Condescension, Moderation\*, Bro-  
 therly Love\*, Christian Piety, Honesty, Charity, So-  
 briety, so fill our veins, as to run through all our  
 actions, yea through all the Stages of our life, and  
 so brightly shine forth upon all the by-standers, as to  
 influence them to do the same.

\* See what  
 the Reverend  
 Bishop Wil-  
 kinson saith on  
 that subject,  
 recommen-  
 ded by the  
 very much  
 admired Dr.  
 Tillotson.

\* 1 Thef. 4.

9, 10.

\* Jer. 23.

But again thirdly; If the worshiping Stocks and  
 Stones, being form'd, hammer'd out into a God, or  
 a Saint, which is no less than Idolatry; if perjury or  
 forswearing, which the Land ought to mourn for \*;  
 if Treasons or Conspiracies, which are almost as com-  
 mon with some as drinking to one another; if Mur-  
 ders and Massacres against those that will not be guil-  
 ty of the same things; if unwearied Plotting and  
 Counter-plotting to help forward a bad Cause; if de-  
 posing of Kings, overturning of Kingdoms, may pass  
 for

for Reformation; if doing these things themselves, when trac'd to the head, yet now and then confidently fathering the same on others.

Now if all this be an Ordinance of God, and doing God good service, there are those that do it to the life.

I am not so meal mouth'd as to be afraid of naming of them \*, but to do Justice to a Jew, Greek, or a Turk \*. Tho Popery had got the whip hand of Presbytery, and was ready to out-top the Reformed Episcopacy, which God forbid, (God forbid.) yet a true English Christian-like Spirit \*, will soon tell you they are the Roman Factors, the Popes Priests and Jesuits, his Vassals and Hackney Agents \*.

\* Luk. 12. 4. 5.

\* Lev. 19. 15.

\* Deut. 1. 17.

\* Prov. 24.

\* Rom. 10.

12, 13.

\* Luk. 12. 9.

Or by those that fain would be so, or the most genuine construction that can be put upon it, that act, and formally do the same things, tho they know it not. If this be serving of God, there is no doubt but they out-do us all, and according to their old, State State Tenets, Beloved Principles, Wedded Politicks, they think they merit Heaven by it, consecrating the very Instruments for so holy (or rather horrid) imploy. But the Lord preserve us from so much as being tainted with so bloody, blasphemous, lying, Idolatrous \*, scandalous and tyrannical Religion, that is, for Lording it over mens Consciences, as well as Lives and Estates.

\* Look into Dr. Stillingfleet's works, the Protestant Champion against Idolatry on the one hand, and Superstition on the other.

Now contrary to all these, which the Church strictly enjoyns, and which the well constituted Laws of the Nation does approve of, and highly recommend to us, and which God himself does absolutely command, are these that follow, which without hyper-

hyperbolizing, and more gently straining, are the best & strongest Bulwarks to Protestantism, & the best of Religions, if crowned Loyalty, and most renowned Fidelity; if upright Honesty\*, and unshaken Piety; if excellent Sobriety, and admirable Charity; if courteous Affability, and friendly Correspondency; if the deepest unfeigned Humility, and bountiful chearful Liberality\*; if universal Charity, and a true generous Spirit of Christianity, is that which passes currant with all men for the Service of God, how have all, or at least most of us swerv'd, warpt, and strangely digress'd from it, yea gone a whoring after our own Inventions\*?

\* Psal. 15.

\* Gal. 6. 10.

\* 1 Cor. 13.

\* Psal. 106.  
38.

Titus 3.

\* 1 Pet. 4. 8.

\* 1 Thes. 5. 15.

Matth. 5.

Matth. 18.

\* Acts 7. 60.

Again, if thinking well of every body, and speaking so too, so far as Truth will bear us out, or otherwise to be silent\*; for Christian Love will cover a multitude of sins and misdemeanours\*. if bearing and forbearing, if real patience and long suffering, if forgiving and forgetting, if good turns for bad ones, if sincerely loving Enemies\*, the Dissenters, nay the very Papists, their Persons, tho' not their Principles, instead of downright hating them; if heartily praying for their Conversion, instead of their Confusion; if readily blessing of them, instead of cursing them; and at last gasp with the famous Martyr St. Stephen, on our knees to beg of the Lord not to lay it to their charge\*; tho' at the same time they were killing, butchering, and stoning of us to death; if this be to serve the Lord, as really it is, and that all of you know it too in the highest Instances; if of Self denial, and Mortification, which far exceeds all Ecclesiastical Censures, Popish Penances, or Pil-



Pilgrimages to seal the Lord's Service with our Blood, which is so very precious to us, that we are loth to part with the least drop of it, unless it be in the defence and quarrel of our lusts, or for our dearly beloved passions; so that we may cull out of the thinnest, or if you please, out of the fullest Congregation, those that are Doers of thy Word, O Lord, and do thus serve thee to their lives end, and they would scarce be mist; much more would it be so, should we search into Foreign Countrys, how few, or none, would then be met withal of so choice a number? nay, it is well in some measure, instead of meeting with Profelites, and Professors to Protestantism, if they were not Rengeadoes, a kind of Heaven Traitors, to serve the Lord as Christ's own Disciples did, that instead of owning, and boldly confessing him, sneakingly to desert and forsake him, yea basely, cowardly to abandon and forswear him \*. Nay, who is there among many, among all these that we have taken notice of, that are but devoutly praying and praising God, praying to the Almighty to amend and rectifie what is amiss amongst us, and at the same time to praise him \*; that it is no worse with us, whose sins do so abound, superabound, so loudly call, cry for vengeance speedily to be executed upon us. He has born long, he will not bear always \*, yet we have not as yet forborn sinning, but the more incenst him by our daring Crimes, and repeated Provocations\*, as if we would defie Heaven it self to punish us; tho he is long lifting up his hand, yet upon that very account, it will at last fall the more heavy upon us.

\* Math. 26.

70, 72, 74.

Luke 6. 21.

\* 1 Tim. 2.

\* Gen. 6.

\* 1 Joh. 5.

19.

D

If

If you think this now too high a Charge, it is well if the best of us all can come forth, one single person, and say, that he has done this or the other duty, or abstain'd from this or the other sin, so as to become a new Man, that was a bad one before, because he sees God is angry with his People, or the Nation, and threatning them very sorely; and that a dismal Cloud is hanging, hovering over our heads by a twined Thred only, that if it be once suffered to pour forth its Vials of Wrath and Fury upon us, as if it were Fire and Brimstone, to humane appearance, it would consume us, and our posterity, if not seasonably prevented by a real Reformation.

There's no question at all now to be made but many of us would, do, dare talk for our Religion, and, if need were, could fight for God, the Country, the King and Kingdom; but tho we name all these, yet it would be with most at last found, to their lasting disgrace, and eternal infamy, that it was mostly for their near and dear selves; for, where are these? in what corner of the World are they to be met withal, that would chearfully suffer and die for it, that with their Weapons in their hands, could lay them and their Lives at the footstool of Heaven, and say as they profess, so far to do, daily, thy Will, thy (Will,) not ours, be done? Christianity asserts it, I wish and pray, that my heart and yours, when it comes to it, may say so too. For St. Paul to *Timothy*, a man of sufferings, in that known place \*, tells us positively, *All that will live godly must*

\* 2 Tim. 3.  
12, 13.

*must suffer persecution.* That all of us must expect to be buffetted, either in the act, or in the intention, or in both, as there is occasion; or as we are call'd to it, but upon no pretence whatsoever, to run head-long upon it; yet at last how many more will be found Martyrs to their lusts and Phancies, to their unruly humours, and untoward passions, than to their God, their Saviour, to their King or Country. You may easily gather by what has been already tendred you, I do not at all intend to befriend any Party or Faction; I had rather my faltering Tongue should cleave to the roof of my Mouth\*, than so far to do; my design is only to press on you uncoun-  
 terfeit Piety, and real Holiness, Christian Loyalty, and ready Obedience, whatever comes on't; that I would have you not to be byass'd, to flag, or be turn'd aside at any thing, but to weather-beat, and to endure the brunt and shock of the most threatening dangers\*; for had I so much as a thought to become a popular Preacher, to be the Worlds\* Minion or Favourite, and to serve my self, instead of serving my God\*, I would go another way to work\*, to keep at as great a distance as might be from mens sins, or sore places. As to give you but a tast\*, like a fair spoken Jesuit in Masquerade, that has his full Com-  
 mission to act any part, whether Atheist, Fanatick, or Papist; that makes nothing at all of wresting the most Sacred Records, so as to force them to speak as he would have them; 1. As first to one Club rendezvouz of boon Companions, I would comply with them as far as I could; And by my

\* Psal. 137.

\* Eph. 8. 6.

\* Jam. 4. 4.

\* Gal. 1. 10.

\* Psal. 82. 6,  
7.

\* Mat. 24. 23.  
24.



Exod. 32. Example I would encourage them to take their  
 1 Luke 12. swing, to eat, drink, play \*, and be merry \*, and  
 \* 9, 20. do whatever they had a mind to \*, tho one does  
 1 Cor. 15. not know what a day may bring forth, and that to-  
 32. morrow one may die for't \*.  
 \* Pro, 27. 1.

2. Again, to another select number and Tribe,  
 \* Jam. 1. 26. I would hearten them on, to take not their Chri-  
 stian \*, but the Libertines Liberty, and tell them  
 of luscious promises, fine pleasing things to tickle  
 their effeminate fancies; and if this did not found  
 \* 2 Tim. 4. well, I would in Scripture Language claw their  
 itching Ears, \* by crying, Peace, peace; tho sudden  
 \* 1 Theff. 5. destruction was ready to befall them \*; yet I  
 3. would flatter them, that tho they were perverse  
 and froward, peevish and passionate, self-will'd and  
 head-strong in private, in their Families, if it did  
 not come to the worlds knowledge, I would not  
 boggle, seriously to tell and tantalize 'em too, that  
 \* Mal. 3. 17. whatever they did, they were God's Jewels \*, the  
 \* Heb. 1. 6. Heirs of Promise \*, yea the very Darlings of Hea-  
 ven, tho to their unspeakable sorrow, and amazing  
 disappointment, they'd find the bottomless Pit to  
 be the only place of their Inheritance, and the Lot  
 and Portion of Hypocrites to be their Doom.

\* Jer. 5. 2.  
 \* Mat. 23.  
 14.  
 \* Mat. 24. 51.

3. But again, especially to a third gang and par-  
 cel, that I should expect the greatest Harvest from,  
 that stile themselves the most Christian-like people,  
 \* 1 Tim. 4. tho the most carnal and diabolical \*, both in their  
 Principles and Practices, I would Saint 'em, and  
 pretend to inroll them in Heavens Calendar, bear-  
 ing them in hand, as if it did lie in my power to set

set them at Christ's left and right hand, if they would but unking Kingdoms, and set the World it self in a combustion \*, and on a flame, and then \* Aſ. 17. 6. would have them with *Pilate*, wash their hands in <sup>6.</sup> \* Mat. 27. innocency \*, wipe their mouths too, and say, What <sup>24.</sup> have they done that should so incense all Parties against them, I would further strive to make them believe that they did God good service thereby \*, \* Joh. 16. 2. that they should at last have a Coronation, instead of meeting with a Damnation day \*. If they would \* Rom. 13. 2. but, like the Evil one in the Gospel \*, sow Weeds \* Mat. 13. 24, and Tares in the Protestants Wheat, ( not only in <sup>25, 28.</sup> private Assemblies, but in the Publick ones, that are allowed by Authority,) and when they had done that, to bundle them up Wheat and Chaff, all of us together, especially the most remarkable opposers, as the most combustible matter, fittest for the Papists Bonfire, or to take that easy plausible way, as to throw Bones of Contention amongst us, and then glory in it \*, (which some I \* Phil. 3. 18. am afraid already have effectually done) making <sup>19.</sup> us to bite, tear, devour one another \*, without so \* Gal. 5. 14. much as putting to their helping hand, and then such shall be said to do God good service, tho they were immediately imploy'd in Satan's Drudgery.

Thus, thus would I do, were I to serve my self on the vain World, tho not so bluntly as I have done it here, for this was done designedly to let you see through the thin Vail that was drawn over a little to disguise & varnish it dele, ovey but remembring, (remembring,) that I am a Servant of the high God, therefore as Heaven's Ambassador, I bespeak you, beseech

befeech you in his most glorious Name, having to do with a better Pay-Master than such Bragadosia's, or meer puffs of Wind can pretend to, promise me, or any other, do roundly, not mincingly tell you over again by way of general direction.

3. In the last place ; If you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish \*. It is not enough that you have *Abraham* \*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* for your Father ; I mean no more by it than this, thô you be born of Christian Parents, and bear so honourable a Name of being Protestants, and would continue so from one Generation to another, yet that will not serve turn, thô you be of the Church of *England*, of *Rome*, of *Geneva*, or of the Brotherhood, or of separate Congregations \*, it will be no acceptable service at all \*, unless you do the injoynd Will of your Father in Heaven, be Israelites without guile in deed and in truth.

And that you may be thoroughly known whatever Names you may go by, 'tis demanded from the Church-Party to see their Faith by their good works \*, of all others to know the Tree by its Fruit \* ; this takes most, thô both Scripture expressions, and the sense partly the same ; the former to see their Principles by their Practices, the latter to know their lives by their fruit bearing, I mean, by their upright, honest, conscientious living. Therefore this is known for a great truth, to be the Lords Livery, wherever 'tis worn throughout the parts of *Europe*, *Cease to do evil, learn to do well* \*. If you'll be stil'd the Lord's Servants, a great deal is coucht under

\* Luke. 13.

\* Matth. 3.

\* Gal. 3.  
Col. 3.

\* 1 Cor. 7. 19.

\* Jam. 2.

\* Matth. 7.

\* Isa. 1. 16, 17.



under those two short Sentences; as to the particulars, I refer you to what hath been already offered to you; but if you would have it over again in other words, look in the Prophet *Micah* \*; *What does the Lord require of you, but to do Justice, love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* That is in short, let Sobriety and Temperance be practised on your selves, Righteousness and Justice to your Neighbour, Piety and Godliness to your Maker, and you will find \*, that you are not then to be found in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in Strife and Envy, &c. but imitate the Lord Jesus, as he hath already given us an Example.

\* Mich. 6. 8.

\* Luk. 13. 13.

I can only now touch on things, and as it were, dart Truths at random; yet as you have it in the first Book of *Samuel* \*, a stone being slung by a contemptible Stripling, what effect it had. Now God's Spirit, and your own Conscience levelling this and the other Truth, that it may hit the white, the mark, sink down into the heart, and kill a *Goliath*, a Gigantick sin, whatever you may term me for throwing my poor Mite into the Treasury and Corban of the Lord's Service. I'll not go on in reparteeing as to call you uncircumcised Christians, whilst I am upon serving *England's* living God, but accost you with all the respect and tenderness that the Subject is able to bear. I'll treat you, yea address my self to you, not as you are the poor despicable Subjects of a great Prince, but as if ye were so many Grandees and Monarchs of several little Worlds and Countrys, which

\* 1 Sam. 17.

\* Mark 12.

which was the first Original of Families, as you may see at large in the Old Testament; every Head of a Family, being a kind of a petty God or King; and still in many respects you are so within your Precincts and Provinces, within your own proper Stations and Boundaries, within your own Dominions and Domestick Territories, if you do not forfeit your right and title thereto by a false Religion, by Rebellion, Sacrilege, or the like, which is cry'd out against as much as the deadly sin of Sorcery or Witchcraft \*.

1 Sam. 15.

23.

Therefore 'tis to you pious Parents, and worthy Governours of your Families, tho' you have never so mean thoughts of your selves, the more you are so for being humble, meek, lowly, and submissive, that my suit is in the behalf of the great Majesty, not only of Earth, but Heaven, that you and your

\* In what manner Dr. Calamy has done't, you may see on that Text, *Rom.* 3. 8. pag. 28, 29, 30, 31. 'tis with that confession, solemnity, protestation, & nobleness of spirit, that it deserves to be engrav'd in Letters of Gold, if it would but excite all others to take up the same Christian alike resolution in the behalf of God, the Church, the King, the present Government, the Country, against either Popery or Fanaticism.

houses would resolve \* to serve the Lord; There (*There*) there you are so many petty Kings to controul and command according to your own private will and pleasure, and your dutiful Children are as so many little Princes about you, and your trusty Servants are as so many Lords, not Slaves, attending on you. Now is it not great pity that such a glorious Equipage, heavenly Retinue, should be badly im-

ploy'd in Satans drudgery instead of the Lords honourable service; yea every poor man in his weather-beaten Cottage, has as much Command and Authority there under his thatcht Roof, and narrow  
 Confines,

Confines, as the Peer and Noble man has within his spacious Mannor, or Princely Pallace.

Therefore all of you, I humbly beseech you, Rule well within your own Stations and Territories, keep up their good Order and Kingly Government, and instruct all under you, in Obedience and Duty, in Justice and Honesty, to your selves, and others; and what you expect from them, to you, according to that golden Rule, Doing as you would be done by; it does not repent me, tho this be the second or third time : I have had it on this Subject, that you by your Examples press it the more on them, by doing it, and continually practising the same, your selves to those above you; especially to those to whom you owe subjection, to Kings, and to all that are plac'd in Authority under them, and then this will be to the honour of God, to the Advancement of your Religion, to the Well being of your selves, to the promoting of your Families, to the Benefit of your Neighbours, to the Glory of our Nation, and at last to your own Eternal Salvation. And till you have done all this in your own houses, be not under any pretence whatsoever drawn out to the reforming, and new-modelling of Nations : It is too great a work for every Mechanick or single States-man to undertake, such grand matters are for the whole Nation to consult on, or at least for their Representatives imbodyed into one ; For what says the wise man, that great States-man of all others, King Solomon by name, That *in the multitude of Counsellors there is (much) safety* \*. So that now for you that are present, tho many, yet scarce the thou-

\* Prov. 11.

14.



sandth Man of them that are in His Majesties Dominion : Therefore it behoves you, instead of mending and new molding of Kingdoms, let your Eyes be turned within doors ; begin at home, and you will find such need of repairs there, that you'l not easily be tempted to look abroad for want of better Employment, as the Lord knows all of us too frequently are. Grant that the Nation is bad, very bad, but do not you make it worse by being so too. Nay further, admit of it, that it not only has a Mote, but a very great Beam in its Eye, that it is not at all sensible of it, and almost blinded with it, that it begins to be frantick and raving, with its pricking pain ; what then, shall we like Quacks and Mountebanks, long to be meddling and tampering with it ? No, no ! I hope we are all of us so ingenuous, and I do not at all doubt of it, but that we will freely acknowledg that there is something, tho' it be never so little in our own Eyes, that each single person in the Kingdom would be pleas'd to pluck out that which is in their own, or in their Families ; and when we come to see clearly, by that time there will not be so much as the least Speck, Lota, in the Eye of the Nation left.

To conclude ; We have hitherto been too preposterously imploy'd, and begun undiscree'tly, very odly at the wrong end, as if we would Tile the House, or Thatch it with Straw or Stubble, and then daub up the Walls with our untemper'd Mortar, and not only so, but to hang it too in the fleeting Air by Geometry, before we have so much as laid the very foundation, the first corner Stone. The  
New

New Testament tells you, this is not like a Master-builder \*. We may hold up these light shingles, or whiffling straws, that the wind blows to and fro up in our hands, or support them for a short time, with the strong blasts of our foul mouths, but in time weary of the Employ, and slavish Service, they will at last, (if not timely taken down,) fall like heavy Slates, upon our heads, and dash us, ours, our Religion, our threatned Church, our tottering State, our poor King, and poorer Kingdom, into a thousand piece-meals \*, making all our Habitations *empty, void and waste*, which the Lord in his mercy prevent, and grant that we and our Houses may forthwith serve the Lord, in that manner that may be most acceptable to him, that he, and his Church, has appointed, to his Glory, and to our own Salvation: The Lord grant so great a blessing to the whole Nation, for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen, Amen.*

\* Luke 14.

\* Nahum.

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F I N I S.

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